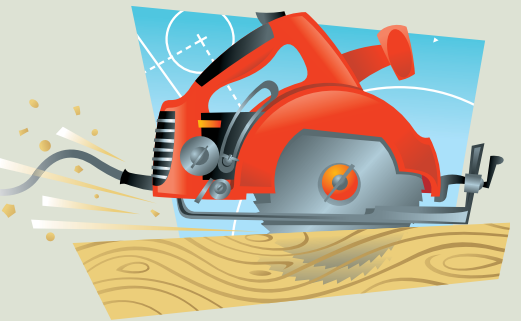




Environmental Health's Shannon Rohr, center, and Doug Dyer, left answer questions.



BLOOMINGTON HOME IMPROVEMENT FAIR FREE IDEAS AND ADVICE

THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON AND THE Housing and Redevelopment Authority will host their eighth Home Improvement Fair, **Saturday, February 16, 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.** at Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road.

If you're thinking of making home improvements, you won't want to miss this free event. Fairgoers will be able to visit a variety of home improvement exhibits, ask questions and get ideas for remodeling projects.

For more information, call HRA Program Manager Bryan Hartman at 952-563-8943.



HOLIDAY RECYCLING SAVE RESOURCES

A TYPICAL MINNESOTAN CREATES SIX pounds of waste a day. But from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day, household waste increases by more than 25 percent. Added food waste, shopping bags, wrapping paper, bows and ribbons – it all adds up to an additional one million tons a week to the nation's garbage piles.

THE TOP FIVE THINGS YOU CAN DO:

- 1 Give gifts that conserve natural resources.
- 2 Use reusable tableware.
- 3 Buy LED lights.
- 4 Recycle gift boxes, cardboard boxes and holiday cards.
- 5 Reuse wrapping paper, ribbon and bows.



Earth Action Heroes protect the earth. Whether it's saving energy or guarding Bloomington's natural resources, these individuals are making a difference. Here are your neighbors in action ...

EARTH ACTION HEROES ENERGY-SAVING DUO ENJOY GREEN HOME

ELISE DURBIN KNEW THAT NO MATTER where she moved, she wanted to make her new home energy efficient. Her husband James, although not against the idea, wanted to save money on their energy bills. When they bought the property on the corner of West Old Shakopee Road and Vincent Avenue, they were both pleasantly surprised to find it already energy efficient. The Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) purchased the dilapidated house that used to occupy the lot and tore it down. The HRA then contracted with carpentry students from Hennepin County Technical College to build an energy-efficient home with lots of curb appeal.

According to Carpentry Instructor and Construction Manager Bill Joos, heavier insulation in the walls, double insulation in the attic, foam insulation sprayed into all the hard-to-reach areas, sound barriers in the windows and Energy Star appliances are just a few of the home features that will save Elise and James money on their energy bills.

"A lot of what we did isn't unusual, it's actually code now, but the difference

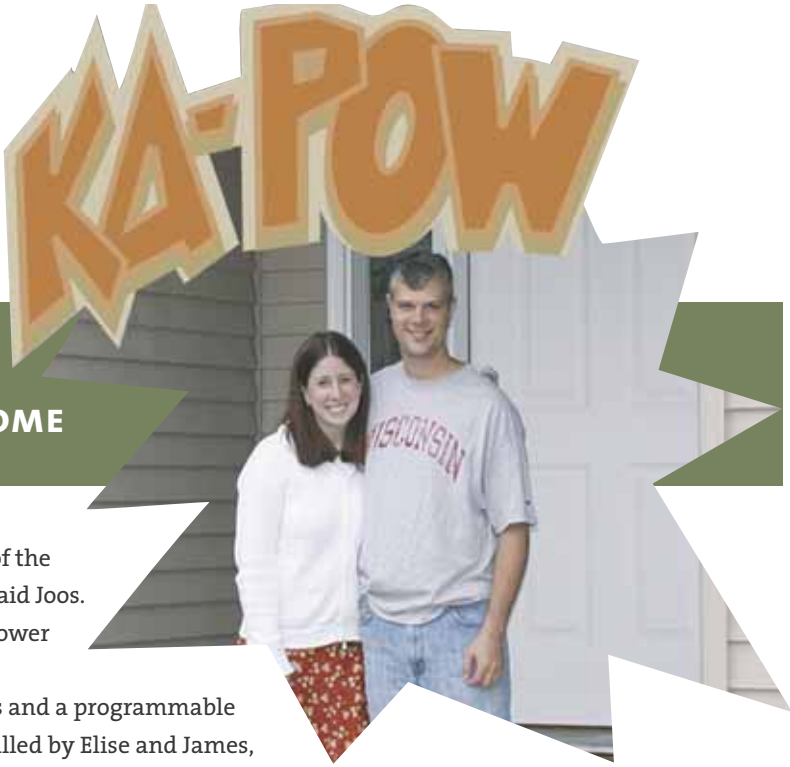
is in the meticulousness of the workmanship," said Joos.

Low-flow shower heads, compact fluorescent bulbs and a programmable thermostat, installed by Elise and James, will make the home even more earth- and pocketbook-friendly. And for a home on the corner of a busy road, it is remarkably quiet, thanks to the soundproofed windows installed by the students.

"We came to see the house during rush hour because we were a little concerned about the location, but it was



A programmable thermostat is a dual winner: it conserves energy and lowers heating and cooling bills.



so quiet," said Elise. "The only time we hear the traffic outside is when we have the windows open."

Elise and James both love the vaulted ceilings and second floor balcony overlooking the living area. They also love their Energy Star appliances, including a dishwasher and a washer-dryer set.

"The washer spins our clothes so fast they're practically dry by the time we take them out," said James.

Elise and James plan on continuing their conservation efforts outside by purchasing a rain barrel to collect storm water runoff.

For more information on making your home energy efficient, call the Center for Energy and Environment's Kristen DeGrande at 612-335-5884.

MORE ENERGY AND MONEY-SAVING NEWS



STORM OPERATIONS SUPPORT SUSTAINABILITY TREE DEBRIS RECYCLED AS ENERGY

THE AUGUST STORMS THAT SWEEPED THROUGH BLOOMINGTON HAD PUBLIC WORKS crews working around the clock picking up more than 7,000 truckloads of storm-damaged trees and brush citywide.

Where did all the debris go once it was picked up and piled away? The answer – it was recycled. Crews from District Energy St. Paul ground the tree debris into wood chips and hauled it to their St. Paul energy plant. The chips will eventually be recycled into biomass fuel for St. Paul Cogeneration, a combined heat and power plant providing electricity to Xcel Energy and hot water to District Energy.

The City has maintained a partnership with District Energy St. Paul, working with the company as part of the City's diseased tree program. The ongoing relationship is a mutual benefit – District Energy St. Paul is provided with a good alternative fuel source and the City is able to dispose of tree debris at no cost.

For more information, call Bloomington Assistant Maintenance Superintendent Paul Edwardson at 952-563-8762.

WAYS TO SAVE

SOME TIPS TO SAVE ENERGY AND money include:

- **Be wary of "vampire electronics,"** such as cell phones, coffeemakers, microwaves, power clocks and computers. These devices consume energy even when not actively used.
- **Activate "sleep" features on computers and office equipment.** Turn off equipment during longer periods of nonuse.
- **Check the furnace or air conditioner filter each month,** and clean or replace it as needed.
- **In winter, set your thermostat to the lowest possible comfortable setting.** At night, put an extra blanket on the bed and turn down your thermostat.
- **Take five-minute showers instead of baths** to save hot water.
- **Heat or cool only the rooms you need** – close vents and doors of unused rooms.

For more tips, visit the Alliance to Save Energy at www.powerinyourhands.org.